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## News Release

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**Share!** #Durham joins @BloombergDotOrg Innovation Team Program & wins grant to help deliver better results for residents

## **Durham Joins Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Team Program In Latest Expansion**

*New Multi-Year Grant to Help Durham Focus on Community Challenges and Create  
Better Results*

DURHAM, N.C. – Bloomberg Philanthropies has recognized the City of Durham as a new member of its Innovation Team program, which helps City Halls drive bold innovation, change culture, and tackle big problems to deliver better results for residents.

Durham was selected from a pool of municipalities with a demonstrated commitment to designing and delivering bold solutions to complex problems. Other cities selected for the global program include Be'er Sheva, Israel; Toronto, Canada, and Anchorage, AK; Austin, TX; Baltimore, MD; Detroit, MI; and Durham, NC in the United States.

Currently in the third round of funding, the program will allow the City to fund an in-house innovation team, or "i-team," to pioneer new approaches that improve the lives of residents. "The Innovation Teams Program strongly aligns with City Council priorities of improving the lives and job opportunities for people involved in the justice system; lowering the violent crime rate and reducing high levels of poverty in certain areas of our city; and providing a stronger focus on our youth," City of Durham Mayor Bill Bell said. "I'm especially excited about the opportunity to become a part of the larger Bloomberg i-Team learning community to share, inspire and tackle big urban problems with other like-minded communities."

Innovation Teams investigate complex local challenges, design solutions with clear goals, and rigorously measure progress to improve citizens' lives. Each city will be awarded up to \$500,000 annually for up to three years. In addition to the grants, the city will receive robust implementation support and opportunities to exchange lessons learned and best practices with peers in other cities. The i-team will embark on its mission to design and deliver bold solutions for the city's most challenging problems.

Although the final amount of Durham's award will be determined later, the grant will fund three i-team staff positions and appropriate work space and travel expenses. The i-team's work will be overseen by the City's Budget and Management Services Department's Office of Performance and Innovation, which submitted the grant proposal.

The Innovation Team approach also fits within Durham's multi-faceted and multi-agency approach to address complex community issues. One example was Durham's Misdemeanor Diversion program, cited by Judge Marcia H. Morey, in a letter of support for Durham's application. "The program has been very successful and now is offered to young people up to the age of 21," she wrote. "I am dedicated to find more opportunities for innovation to help reduce (the number of) young people from dropping out of school and becoming criminally involved."

The Innovation Teams Program is one of seven Government Innovation offerings at Bloomberg Philanthropies. Government Innovation equips mayors and other city leaders with the tools and techniques they need to solve urban challenges and improve citizens' lives. More information about the Innovation Team Program is available through the Bloomberg Philanthropies [website](#).

### **About the Budget and Management Services Department**

The City of Durham [Budget and Management Services Department](#) is responsible for the development and oversight of the City's annual budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The department is also responsible for performance management, continuous improvement, and strategic planning. A division of the department, the [Office of Performance and Innovation](#), serves as internal consultants, helping City departments accomplish Durham's "One Vision and Five Goals" through:

- Advancing the City's [Strategic Plan](#)
- Providing framework for data-driven decisions

- Fostering a culture of innovation
- Facilitating process improvements

### **About Bloomberg Philanthropies**

Bloomberg Philanthropies' mission is to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Public Health, Environment, Education, Government Innovation and the Arts. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2015, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$510 million. For more information, visit [www.bloomberg.org](http://www.bloomberg.org) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Snapchat](#), and Twitter [@BloombergDotOrg](#).

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